

# News Release

Bureau of Land Management, Spokane District  
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## ***For Immediate Release***

### **Status of BLM-Administered Lands Within Juniper Forest Management Area Near Pasco, Washington**

The Spokane District Bureau of Land Management (BLM) manages public land near Pasco, Washington, that has been the subject of popular recreational use, particularly off-highway vehicles in the spring and fall. Due to lack of legal public access to these lands, the public's use has always been subject to securing permission across private lands to reach the public lands.

Between August 1 and October 12, 2001, the Juniper Forest area was closed to public use per a BLM regulated fire closure of public lands throughout eastern Washington. *Currently, the BLM-administered lands within the Juniper Forest management area are officially open to use by the public. However, there is still no legal public access into the Juniper Forest. Roads leading into the area cross private property. Any use of the roads that cross private land requires the permission of the landowners.* Information regarding the identity of private landowners is available through Franklin County courthouse records.

The lack of access to public lands in the Juniper Dunes vicinity is an issue that Spokane BLM District has attempted to resolve for several years. However, BLM's attempts to acquire public access have not been successful for a variety of reasons, one of which is failure to reach agreement on land values.

Kevin Devitt, Field Manager for the Border Resource Area of the Spokane BLM District, says their office has received many inquiries about the status of the Juniper Forest lands. Devitt says, "We are well aware of the desires of public land users from the local community, as well as many across the state and neighboring states, to have public access to this area. Knowing this, we are continuing to explore new opportunities with private landowners to secure public access to the Juniper Forest area. We ask the public to recognize that resolving access issues can be a lengthy process."

A map of the BLM's Juniper Forest Management Area is available on the Spokane District's website at <[www.or.blm.gov/spokane](http://www.or.blm.gov/spokane)>. The map is also available through the Spokane District office at 1103 N. Fancher Road, Spokane, WA 99212-1275, telephone (509) 536-1200.

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